

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed June 27, 2001, has been reviewed and the comments of the Patent and Trademark Office have been considered. Claims 10 to 12 have been added. Support for the new claims can be found throughout the original disclosure. For example, new claim 10 is supported by Examples 1-4. See Table 1 on page 15 of the specification, where the amounts of component C according to Examples 1-4 are respectively 46 wt%, 45 wt%, 42 wt% and 62 wt%. For example, according to Example 1 in Table 1, $150 \div (100 + 20 + 150 + 55 + 1) \times 100 = 46$ (wt%). New claims 11-12 are also supported by Examples 1-4 in Table 1. No new matter has been entered. Claims 1 to 12 are pending for consideration.

Restriction Requirement

Upon a finding that claims 1 and 2 are allowable, rejoinder and examination of claims 3 to 9 pursuant to MPEP 821.04 are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lakshmanan et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,958,594. Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 10(b) as being anticipated by Lakshmanan et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,958,594. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that component C (a hydrocarbonic plasticizer) of the claimed invention is neither disclosed nor suggested by Lakshmanan. As pointed out by the Examiner, applicants acknowledge that Lakshmanan discloses that paraffin and microcrystalline waxes, Fisher-Tropsh waxes, low molecular weight polyethylene, low molecular weight polybutenes (Applicants point out that the term "polybutadienes" of the Office Action (page 3, line 5) is not correct), process oils, etc. can also be incorporated into the composition (see column 5, lines 10-19). Applicants submit, however, that these additives of Lakshmanan are waxes, which are an optional additive of the present invention.

See page 7, lines 24-32. More importantly, these additives of Lakshmanan are different from the claimed hydrocarbonic plasticizer (see page 7, lines 24 to page 8, line 1 of the specification). In other words, the above substances of Lakshmanan are not used as hydrocarbonic plasticizers. Thus, Lakshmanan fails to disclose or suggest the claimed component C.

In addition, Lakshmanan fails to teach or suggest the amount of component A as claimed. The Examiner asserts that wax is used at 47.5% (see Table III, bridging col. 7 and 8 of Lakshmanan). Applicants acknowledge that wax (Shellwax 700) in Run 6 of Table III is used at 47.2 wt% since $47.50 \text{ (parts by weight)} \div 100.6 \text{ (total parts by weight)} = 47.2\%$. However, the amount of Kraton GX-1657 (corresponding to the component A of the claimed invention) in Run 6 is 4.97 wt% since $5.00 \text{ (parts by weight)} \div 100.6 \text{ (total parts by weight)} = 4.97\%$. In contrast, according to the claimed invention, the amount of the component A is 10-40 wt%. Thus, in addition to failing to teach or suggest the claimed component C, applicants submit that the claimed amount of component A is neither disclosed nor suggested over the disclosure of Lakshmanan that the Examiner relies upon for allegedly teaching component C (i.e., Run 6 of Lakshmanan; Lakshmanan's optional substances of column 5, lines 10-19 were not used at all in the other Runs 1-5 and 7-50 of Lakshmanan). Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Applicants have further added new claims 10-12, as above. New claim 10 is substantially the same as claim 1, except that the amount of the component C is recited as 42-62 wt%. In contrast with new claim 10, the Lakshmanan's substances described above (which the Examiner asserts corresponds to component C) are optionally added in an amount of up to 40 wt%. Thus, new claim 10, together with its dependent claims 11 and 12, is believed to be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. An early notice to

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this effect is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions regarding the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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